

**II. Amendments to the Claims:**

*Please amend the claims as follows:*

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listing of claims in the application.

**CLAIMS:**

What is claimed is:

Claims 1-9 (canceled)

10. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification method as described in claim 9 further comprising the step of the steps of:

- identifying a specimen donor with a specimen donor identification information item;
- adequately specifying a specimen related event identifier;
- associating said specimen donor identification information item with said specimen related event identifier;
- generating a unique specimen identification information item in response to said step of associating said specimen donor identification information item with said specimen related event identifier;
- rendering said specimen donor identification information item not immediately discernible;
- associating a discernment process specificity information item with said not immediately discernible specimen donor identification information item; and
- associating a character-based discernment code with said discernment process specificity information item to create a code representation information item,

wherein said character-based discernment code represents said discernment process specificity information item.

11. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification method as described in claim 10 further comprising the step of associating said character-based discernment code with said unique specimen identification information item.
12. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification method as described in claim 11 wherein said step of associating said character-based discernment code with said unique specimen identification information item comprises the step of visually associating.
13. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification method as described in claim 12 wherein said step of generating a unique specimen identification information item comprises the step of generating a unique specimen identification information item that comprises said character-based discernment code.
14. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification method as described in claim 10 further comprising the step of limiting access to said code representation information item.
15. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification method ~~as described in claim 8~~ comprising the steps of:
  - identifying a specimen donor with a specimen donor identification information item;
  - adequately specifying a specimen related event identifier;
  - associating said specimen donor identification information item with said specimen related event identifier;

- generating a unique specimen identification information item in response to said step of associating said specimen donor identification information item with said specimen related event identifier; and
- rendering said specimen donor identification information item not immediately discernible.

wherein the step of rendering said specimen donor identification information item not immediately discernible comprises the step of encrypting said specimen donor identification information item to create an encrypted specimen donor identification information item.

16. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification method as described in claim 15 further comprising the step of associating a decryption algorithm specificity information item with said encrypted specimen donor identification information item, wherein said decryption algorithm specificity information item is usable to decrypt said encrypted specimen donor identification information item.
17. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification method as described in claim 16 further comprising the step of associating a ~~character-based,~~ character-based decryption code with said decryption algorithm specificity information item to create a code representation information item, wherein said character-based discernment code represents said decryption algorithm specificity information item.
18. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification method as described in claim 17 further comprising the step of associating said character-based discernment code with said unique specimen identification information item.

19. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification method as described in claim 18 wherein said step of associating said character-based discernment code with said unique specimen identification information item comprises the step of visually associating.
20. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification method as described in claim 19 wherein said step of generating a unique specimen identification information item comprises the step of generating a unique specimen identification information item that comprises said character-based decryption code.
21. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification method as described in claim 17 or 20 further comprising the step of limiting access to code representation information item.
22. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification method as described in claim 16 further comprising the step of limiting access to said code representation information item.
23. (canceled)
24. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification method as described in claim 23 comprising the steps of:
- identifying a specimen donor with a specimen donor identification information item;
  - adequately specifying a specimen related event identifier;
  - associating said specimen donor identification information item with said specimen related event identifier;

- generating a unique specimen identification information item in response to said step of associating said specimen donor identification information item with said specimen related event identifier; and
- rendering said specimen related event identifier not immediately discernible,

wherein the step of rendering said specimen related event identifier not immediately discernible comprises the step of encrypting said specimen related event identifier to create an encrypted specimen related event identifier.

25. (canceled)

26. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification method as described in claim 25 comprising the steps of:

- identifying a specimen donor with a specimen donor identification information item;
- adequately specifying a specimen related event identifier;
- associating said specimen donor identification information item with said specimen related event identifier; and
- generating a unique specimen identification information item in response to said step of associating said specimen donor identification information item with said specimen related event identifier.

wherein the step of generating a unique specimen identification information item comprises the step of generating a unique specimen identification information item that is not immediately discernible, and

wherein the step of generating a unique specimen identification information item that is not immediately discernible comprises the step of generating an encrypted specimen identification information item.

27. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification method as described in claim 26 further comprising the step of associating a decryption algorithm specificity information item with said encrypted specimen identification information item, wherein said decryption algorithm specificity information item facilitates decryption of said encrypted specimen identification information item.
28. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification method as described in claim 27 further comprising the step of associating a character-based, decryption code with said decryption algorithm specificity information item to create a code representation information item.
29. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification method as described in claim 28 further comprising the step of associating said character-based discernment code with said encrypted specimen identification information item.
30. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification method as described in claim 29 wherein said step of associating said character-based discernment code with said encrypted specimen identification information item comprises the step of visually associating.
31. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification method as described in claim 30 further comprising the step of establishing said character-based, decryption code as part of said encrypted specimen identification information item.
32. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification method as described in claim 28 or 30 further comprising the step of limiting access to said code representation information item.

Claims 33-43 (canceled)

44. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification apparatus as described in claim 43 further comprising comprising:

- a specimen donor identification information item associated with a specimen to be identified; and

- a specimen related event identifier associated with said specimen and appearing with said specimen donor identification information item so as to establish a specimen identifier,

wherein said specimen donor identification information item is not immediately discernible

wherein said not immediately discernable specimen donor identification information item has associated with it a discernment process specificity information item,

said apparatus further comprising:

a code representation information item in which said discernment process specificity information item has associated with it a character-based discernment code that represents said discernment process specificity information item.

45. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification apparatus as described in claim 44 wherein said character-based discernment code is visually associated with said specimen identifier.

46. (canceled)

47. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification apparatus as described in claim 46 comprising:

- a specimen donor identification information item associated with a specimen to be identified; and

- a specimen related event identifier associated with said specimen and appearing with said specimen donor identification information item so as to establish a specimen identifier.

wherein said specimen donor identification information item is not immediately discernible.

wherein said not immediately discernable specimen donor identification information item is an encrypted specimen donor identification information item, and

wherein said encrypted specimen donor identification information item has associated with it a decryption algorithm specificity information item that facilitates decryption of said encrypted specimen donor identification information item.

48. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification apparatus as described in claim 47 further comprising a code representation information item in which said decryption algorithm specificity information item has associated with it a character-based decryption code that represents said decryption algorithm specificity information item.
49. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification apparatus as described in claim 48 ~~further comprising associating wherein~~ said character-based discernment code is associated with said specimen identifier.
50. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification apparatus as described in claim 49 wherein associating said character-based discernment code

is visually associated with said specimen identifier~~comprises the step of visually associating.~~

51. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification apparatus as described in claim 50 wherein said specimen identifier further ~~comprising~~ comprises said character-based discernment code.

Claims 52-53 (canceled)

54. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification apparatus as described in claim 53 comprising:

- a specimen donor identification information item associated with a specimen to be identified; and

- a specimen related event identifier associated with said specimen and appearing with said specimen donor identification information item so as to establish a specimen identifier,

wherein specimen related event identifier is not immediately discernible,

wherein not immediately discernible specimen related event identifier is an encrypted specimen related event identifier, and

wherein said encrypted specimen related event identifier has associated with it a decryption algorithm specificity information item that facilitates decryption of said encrypted specimen related event identifier.

55. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification apparatus as described in claim 54 further comprising a code representation information item in which said decryption algorithm specificity information item has associated

with it a character-based decryption code that represents said decryption algorithm specificity information item.

56. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification apparatus as described in claim 55 ~~further comprising associating wherein~~ said character-based discernment code is associated with said specimen ~~identification~~ identifier.
57. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification apparatus as described in claim 56 wherein ~~associating~~ said character-based discernment code is visually associated with said specimen identifier ~~comprises the step of visually associating~~.
58. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification apparatus as described in ~~claim 59~~ claim 55 wherein said specimen identifier further ~~comprising~~ comprises said character-base character-based decryption code.
59. (canceled)
60. (canceled)
61. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification apparatus as described in ~~claim 60~~ comprising:
- a specimen donor identification information item associated with a specimen to be identified; and
  - a specimen related event identifier associated with said specimen and appearing with said specimen donor identification information item so as to establish a specimen identifier.

wherein said specimen identifier is not immediately discernable,

wherein said not immediately discernable specimen identifier is an encrypted specimen identifier, and

wherein said encrypted specimen identifier has associated with it a description algorithm specificity information item that facilitates decryption of said encrypted specimen identifier.

62. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification apparatus as described in claim 61 further comprising a code representation information item in which said description algorithm specificity information item has associated with it a character-based decryption code that represents said decryption algorithm specificity information item.
63. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification apparatus as described in claim 62 ~~further comprising associating wherein~~ said character-based decryption code is associated with said encrypted specimen identifier.
64. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification apparatus as described in claim 63 wherein associating said character-based decryption code is visually associated with said encrypted specimen identifier ~~comprises visually associating.~~
65. (currently amended) ~~The specimen~~ A specimen identification apparatus as described in claim 64 wherein said encrypted specimen identifier comprises said character-based decryption code.

Claims 66-69 (canceled)

Claims 70 – 107 (canceled)

108. (canceled)

Claims 109 – 253 (canceled)